

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 185874

FOLLOWING REPEAT ROME 9372 ACTION SECSTATE INFO
LONDON PARIS MOSCOW MONTREAL USUN NEW YORK TEL
AVIV 10 SEPT

QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 9372

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV ADDED
AS INFO ADDRESSEE PER AMEMBASSY ROME)

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ICAO, ETRN

SUBJECT: ICAO AIR SECURITY CONFERENCE: ISRAELI LETTER ON
SEIZURE ANTI-AIRCRAFT MISSILES IN ROME

MONTREAL FOR US REP ICAO

FROM AMBASSADOR ROUNTREE

REF: (A) ROME 9364; 9365

1. FOLLOWING ARE MY VIEWS ON MATTERS CONTAINED REFTELS.

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2. WHILE SEIZURE OF ANTI-AIRCRAFT MISSILES AND ARRESTS

ARE DIRECTLY RELEVANT TO ICAO PROCEEDINGS IN ROME, ISRAELI LETTER SEEMS UNLIKELY TO DRAW OTHER THAN POLEMICAL RESPONSES. AS MADE CLEAR IN USDEL'S PREVIOUS MESSAGES THE COMPOSITION OF THE ICAO ASSEMBLY IS SUCH THAT THERE CAN BE NO OBJECTIVE AIRING OF ARAB/ISRAELI MATTER HERE. CONFRONTATION ON THESE SPECIFIC ISSUES HERE IN MY VIEW CAN ONLY RESULT IN A NET LOSS TO THE USG BOTH IN TERMS OF ITS RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL AND WITH ARAB STATES SINCE OUR POSITION CAN ULTIMATELY SATISFY NEITHER.

3. IF APPROPRIATE OCCASION ARISES IN ASSEMBLY I THINK IT WOULD BE SUITABLE FOR ME TO GO SPECIFICALLY ON RECORD TO EFFECT THAT MISSILE INCIDENT REPRESENTS GRAVE DEVELOPMENT WHICH STRESSES URGENCY OF OUR TASK HERE. SUCH A STATEMENT WOULD SUPPLEMENT MY GENERALIZED REMARKS IN THIS REGARD SEPT 6 AND MIGHT SERVE TO FOCUS PROCEEDINGS UPON AGENDA ITEMS INSTEAD OF ARAB/ISRAELI DISPUTE.

4. MY ESTIMATE IS THAT LETTER IS DESIGNED AS ISRAELI COUNTER-OFFENSIVE AGAINST CONDEMNATORY ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION AND AGAINST ARAB POSITION ON STATE ACTS ISSUE. ISRAELI EFFORTS CONCERNING ITALIAN GOVERNMENT APPEAR DESIGNED BOTH TO HAVE SUBJECT DISCUSSED LETTER IN ASSEMBLY AND TO MAKE IT DIFFICULT FOR ITALIAN GOVERNMENT TO DISPOSE OF CASE QUIETLY AS HAD OCCURRED IN MANY PRIOR PROSECUTIONS OF ARAB TERRORISTS.

5. CONCERNING ISRAELI REQUEST THAT WE JOIN WITH THEIR DELEGATION IN URGING DIALLO AT ICAO TO CIRCULATE ISRAELI COMMUNICATION, I FEEL THAT THIS WOULD BE INAPPROPRIATE AND WOULD BE DETRIMENTAL TO OUR GENERAL POSTURE HERE. ON OTHER HAND, I WOULD LIKE TO AVOID FLAT REJECTION OF REQUEST AND THEREFORE PROPOSE WITH DEPT.. CONCURRENCE SIMPLY TO SAY THAT MATTER BEING CONSIDERED BY WASHINGTON AND IN ABSENCE OF INSTRUCTIONS I AM UNABLE TO JOIN ISRAELI APPROACH. IT SEEMS EVIDENT THAT SHORT DELAY WOULD MOOT THIS ISSUE.

6. RE ISRAELI REQUEST THAT USG APPROACH ITALY CONCERNING ITALIAN OBLIGATIONS UNDER ARTICLE 13 OF CONFIDENTIAL

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MONTREAL CONVENTION, MY VIEW IS THAT IT WAS APPROPRIATE FOR HEAD OF ISRAELI DELEGATION WHO IS ALSO ISRAELI AMBASSADOR TO ITALY TO RAISE THIS QUESTION WITH ITALIAN DELEGATION CONSISTING OF OFFICIALS CONCERNED WITH CIVIL AVIATION MATTERS. IT WOULD BE LESS APPROPRIATE FOR ME TO RAISE SUBJECT WITH ITALIAN DEL WHICH IN MY VIEW COULD BEST BE HANDLED BY US EMBASSY IN ROME OR BY THE DEPARTMENT WITH ITALIAN

EMBASSY, WASHINGTON. IN PRINCIPLE I PERCEIVE
OF NO OBJECTION TO SUCH CONTACT THROUGH NORMAL DIPLOMATIC
CHANNELS BUT I BELIEVE IT SHOULD BE UNDERTAKEN ONLY IF
WE ARE ASSURED THAT ISRAELIS WILL NOT PUBLICIZE OUR
APPROACH. VOLMPE UNQUOTE RUSH

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